

Acorn at Kents Hill

Wadhurst Lane, Kents Hill, MILTON KEYNES, MK7 6JF

Inspection date	22/08/2013
Previous inspection date	24/10/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The nursery does not follow their own policies and procedures for keeping children safe.
- Senior staff within the company do not ensure that those who form the board of trustees for the nursery are checked to ensure their suitability.
- The nursery does not report all significant events to Ofsted as required.
- Parents do not contribute towards children's learning journals by sharing information about development at home.
- The nursery does not readily share the progress check at age two for children to explain to parents how they can support children's learning at home.
- Self-evaluation does not identify aspects of the provision that are weak.

It has the following strengths

- Staff are gentle, affectionate and caring with young children. This helps them to build attachments to those who care for them.
- Staff identify when children's progress causes concern and work with other professionals to develop plans for their learning and development.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities in each room and the garden area.
- The inspector spoke with parents, children and staff.
- A meeting was held with the Managing Director, Registered Person and Manager.
- The inspector looking at required documentation including safeguarding policies and procedures and children's records.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorn at Kents Hill re-registered in 2012. Acorn Childcare manages the nursery. They are a non-profit organisation that operates nurseries and out-of-school provisions in Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire. The nursery is situated in purpose built premises in the residential area of Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The premises are comprised of six interlinking rooms for children's use, an atrium, kitchen, toilet and washing facilities, an office, a staff room, sleep area and outdoor play space. This nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. Nine staff work directly with the children. One member of staff is an Early Years Professional, one is qualified to degree level. The manager has a relevant level 4 qualification and four further staff have a level 3 qualification, two have a level 2 qualification. There are currently 81 children on roll. The nursery receive free early educational funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The nursery supports a number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery opens weekdays from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- implement a policy to safeguard children in particular to take appropriate action when there is an allegation against a member of staff
- ensure there are effective systems for checking the suitability of all those involved in the childcare company
- encourage a two-way flow of information with parents to gather their observations of children progress and achievements at home
- discuss with parents how the progress check for two-year-olds can be used to support children's learning at home
- develop secure systems for monitoring and self-evaluation, to foster a culture of continuous improvement to promote the interests of children.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- ensure that group activities, such as story time, are organised and provision is made for children who do not want to join in or who become distracted.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff gather information about children's learning through observations. They use these to plan for children's learning. Staff track children's progress and recognise when this does not meet expectations. Staff then work with local authority workers and external agencies to develop plans for children's learning and development. Staff do not gather information from parents about their children's learning at home. This means that they cannot suitably assess their stage of development and build upon what they already know. Therefore, monitoring of children's development does not provide an accurate picture of children's capabilities and staff do not explore opportunities to extend upon their interests. Furthermore, when staff complete the progress check at age two for children, they do not readily share this with all parents and explain to them how they can support children's learning at home. Consequently, the document has little purpose and is not helpful in supporting children's progress.

Children enjoy playing with the staff who are responsive to them. Staff talk to children about what they are doing and encourage children to listen. For example, they play with

musical instruments loudly and then quietly. This helps them to begin to develop some skills they need to communicate as they pay attention and respond. Staff model language and help children who speak English as an additional language to hear their home language. Staff learn key words to use with children showing them that their language is valued. Children are confident to talk in a group and ask questions about what is happening and why. At times, activities such as group story time, are disturbed as staff who read to children need to speak with parents. This leads to some children losing interest. In addition, there is no other provision made at this time for children who might not want to join in.

Children develop their physical skills as they climb, swing and slide in the garden. They enjoy playing in ways that help them to balance and develop the strength in their large muscles. Children use forks and spoons as they eat their dinner gaining skill in their smaller muscles. Young children use pencils to draw and observe the marks they make on paper. The nursery introduces children to movement sessions, which interest them. This helps them to enjoy physical exercise in a fun way.

Children are generally sociable and able to get along with each other. Staff encourage children to talk about their feelings and they are beginning to express these. Children chose what they play with and are able to sometimes lead their play. Therefore, they are developing some skills to support them in their move into formal school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff are affectionate and caring with children. They talk to them tenderly and soothe them when they become upset. Children form close bonds with their key person and usually separate from their parents without distress.

Children tend to follow their home routines and staff give them comfort items when they are tired, helping them to feel content. Staff find out some information from parents in an 'All About Me' sheet which helps children to experience continuity in their care routines. Children appear settled and secure. However, because there are breaches in legal requirements relating to safeguarding, this is a false sense of security.

The nursery staff put measures in place to help maintain a clean and hygienic environment for children. They make sure that children know which cup to drink from because they tie photographs of children to them. This helps children to recognise which cup belongs to them. Children eat freshly cooked, healthy and balanced meals. Older children grow vegetables in the garden helping them to understand where food comes from, and what a healthy choice is. Regular walks to local parks and engaging in forest school activities help children to develop a love of being outdoors. Children gain skills in perseverance and determination as they test out what they can do to complete challenges.

The nursery helps children to experience smooth changes as they move between rooms and on to school. The staff invite teachers to attend the nursery to meet children, so they

are familiar for children.

Older children begin to develop independence as they dress themselves to play outside. Children are able to choose when they want to go out and when they want to return inside helping them to recognise their own needs. Children usually behave well and follow staff guidance. Positive methods of managing behaviour help all children to begin to know how to get along with others. When children need extra support, staff respond to their needs and explain their expectations for behaviour clearly.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

This inspection was brought forward as the result of a concern about how complaints are handled by the nursery and how the suitability of those involved in the nursery is checked. At the time of inspection, a member of the board of trustees at the nursery had failed to complete all paperwork relating to the Disclosure and Barring Service. This is to enable his suitability to be fully checked. The board member is aware of his legal requirement to complete this document. Senior staff at the nursery are aware that this suitability check is not complete and have failed to take suitable action to rectify the situation.

Investigation into recent complaints reveals that there has been an incident where an allegation was made against a member of staff. This was in relation to the way that staff handle children, and the concern was that children were roughly handled. The manager and registered person confirm that on this occasion they decided not to follow the nursery policy and procedure to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer as required. This is a breach of a legal requirement. In addition, the provider fails to meet the requirements of the Childcare Register. Furthermore, the nursery is legally required to make Ofsted aware of such incidents. The manager and registered person know that significant events need to be reported to Ofsted, and on this occasion, they failed to do so. This demonstrates that the senior staff have a disregard for following measures which are put into place to help to keep children safe. Consequently, safeguarding of children's well-being is not good enough.

The nursery puts into place some measures to evaluate the quality of care it provides. It consults with parents through questionnaires and uses local authority and internal audits. However, this fails to identify all weaknesses. For example, staff do not complete the progress check at age two for children in consultation with parents. There are too few opportunities for parents to share their observations of children's progress at home. These impact upon children's ability to reach their full potential and mean relationships with parents are not strong enough.

Staff supervision supports those working with children, but is not robust across all levels. Staff training helps some staff to improve their knowledge and skills. This means that they are able to identify when children's progress does not meet expectations. They work with other professionals to support children and develop individual plans for managing children's behaviour and guiding their learning. There are sound links with the local school

and staff have contacted teachers to share information about children's needs.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- keep and implement a written statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse or neglect (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447040
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	933237
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	81
Name of provider	Acorn Childcare 2
Date of previous inspection	24/10/2012
Telephone number	01908 200 281

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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